

Torrance Herald

Established 1914

GLENN W. PFEIL

Publisher

REID L. BUNDY - Managing Editor

THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 1964

Evils of Indifference

President George Post of the Torrance Chamber of Commerce might well have been speaking for all us when he submitted his "President's Message" for the February issue of the Chamber's Business News and Views.

"Local government with its faults is such, not because those who govern are unqualified, but rather that those who are governed have abdicated their solemn duties."

In his message addressed to the Chamber of Commerce membership, President Post exhorted his readers to "be honest . . . face facts!"

"The legacy handed down to us of government by the people has been negated by indifference—an attitude of 'what's the use'—and the firm belief that 'politics' is a dirty word," the message read.

He pointed out that qualified people are "neither willing to soil themselves with 'politics' nor to be soiled by the mud-slinging vilifiers who believe that emotion is a substitute for fact."

The message is one that all Americans could well ponder. Those of us calling Torrance our home can probably reflect with some profit, the Chamber president's exhortation to his membership that "Chamber members—as business and professional leaders—and all those who hear our message must strive to help bring about a truly fine government of the people, for the people, and above all, by the people."

Interest in the affairs of city government will run high during the next few weeks—spurred by reports of an investigation which has been under way by state and county agencies for nearly eight months, and spurred by the realization that three members of the City Council are standing for re-election at a municipal election on April 14. The three men are facing a field of 15 challengers for the three seats.

The election-month interest in the city is not sufficient, however, to erase the stigma of indifference charged to the people in the Chamber president's message. The interest in the affairs of the city should be at election pitch the year around.

"Incompetence is never to be tolerated," the News and Views said.

Indifference, we say, is equally bad.

Girl Scout Week

This year Girl Scout Week will be observed from March 8-14. Completing 52 years of service the Girl Scout organization continues to move ahead to meet the changing needs of today's youngsters.

Girl Scout troops across the nation last year were organized in four new age levels instead of the former three. Girls begin their scouting experience at age 7 in the Brownies and progress through the Juniors, Cadettes, and finally the Seniors for girls 15 through 17.

From their earliest days in Brownies, a feeling of being needed is fostered in the young members and the theme behind scouting is brought alive in terms of day to day activities and experiences—the disposition to try and the desire to be a worthwhile and useful person of service to others. Senior Girl Scouts are encouraged to enlarge their field of interest to merge with the adult world. Pursuing their goal of giving service, they may enter aid projects in cooperation with libraries, hospitals, museums and other institutions.

The responsibility of keeping Girl Scouting alive and vital falls on the voluntary troop leaders and local scouting organizations in communities across the country. The Girl Scouts of America deserve every recognition.

From the Mailbox

Editor, Torrance Herald also believe that anyone making themselves heard has a right to be heard and I duty to those willing to listen.

YOU CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS



ten. That duty is to inform themselves as much as possible before expounding on any given subject.

I refer to your column "Penny for your Thoughts" of Thursday, Feb. 27.

There has been much written on the subject of the United Nations and a little endeavor will enlighten one greatly.

MRS. R. A. JOHNSON

Editor, Torrance Herald I think that your "Penny for Your Thoughts" column is the type of fraudulent trash that is found in a one-horse town publication. I note that all answers are in the affirmative and that they all appear identical in content. Recently this same inquiry was made by the Congressman representing this district and the replies were negative by a substantial margin.

Being statistically minded, I submit the thesis that it is impossible for six consecutive responses to be erroneous there are many valid reasons for admission, though weak) in the same aspect.

I have recently made residence in Lomita and I would like to remark that "this area needs a newspaper." STANLEY PITLICK

Why Sweat So Hard Over It?



ROYCE BRIER

DeGaulle's Drive to Win Far East Power Hits Snag

President De Gaulle's reach in the Far East, designed to substitute French for American and British influence there, has suffered a setback. But it has not failed, nor are American and British prospects any brighter.

The setback involves De Gaulle's break with Nationalist China as the price for recognizing Red China. It was a back-handed break, and it worked some flaw in what was planned as a brilliant de Gaulle departure from Western, particularly American, thinking. De Gaulle had pledged he would not abandon the "two Chinas" concept, but the Red Chinese were too tough for him. De Gaulle's demarche came while his allies were in trouble, the United States chronically in South Vietnam, Britain in Cyprus and Malaysia.

Anyway, de Gaulle must now turn his attention to old Indochina, where he has been offering some tentative pledges, and looking for a chance to make hay.

Old Indochina, where the French power sloughed away after the war, is comprised of North and South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. All have similar economic and social problems, and the same general culture, though they are prides. Laos is technically "neutral," and Cambodia wants to be. North Vietnam is under Red China's influence, and also lacks the food available in South Vietnam, which we know about.

That is, we know what Washington will tell us, or what Washington can't hide, because we are stuck in a losing military operation there. Washington hates to admit it, but signs continue that our grip in South Vietnam is deteriorating, and can only be cured by an American declared war against the Communist guerrillas operating from the North Vietnam base.

But this cure looks somewhat more spongy than the Korean War was, and it is quite unlikely Washington can sell the American people such an adventure.

Meanwhile, French business and political influence survives in the four nations

of old Indochina, and M. de Gaulle is furthering his announced purpose of "neutralization" of the whole area. A news dispatch from Laos says he is beginning there, his policy based on the assumption the United States must in time withdraw from South Vietnam due to Vietnamese apathy.

Washington has no visible shield against de Gaulle's machinations. It can point out, perhaps with some truth, but without persuading anybody, that "neutralization" means an ultimate Communist takeover, because that's the way Communists work. Then John Foster Dulles' crusade of the last decade, started in a jungle so remote it puzzled all but Mr. Dulles and his cronies, will have ended.

JAMES DORIAS

Consumer Is Being Wooed Like Any Political Bloc

One of the strangest phenomena of recent years is the emergence of the consumer as a political "public," to borrow a favorite phrase of the Madison Avenue boys.

All of a sudden, the consumer is being wooed as a separate breed of voter, like the Polish voter, the Muscle Beach voter, or the Zen Buddhist voter. For some reason, explicable only to those gifted with the political expertise to understand why, the consumer has been placed in the category of a minority group.

Consumers, it might appear to the uninitiated, are everywhere, and therefore not reachable by special appeals. But no—consumers really are only to be found in suburbia.

The greatest worry to Democratic Party strategists these

days, according to a New York Herald Tribune dispatch last week, is that suburban population is growing and that Democrats who move to the suburbs tend to switch their registration to Republican as a status symbol. How to appeal to these wayward Democrats? According to Senator Philip A. Hart of Michigan, the way to do it is to promote legislative programs "to safeguard consumer interests."

In a memo to President Johnson dealing with suburban defectors, Senator Hart wrote: "The consumer interest issue has the potential of tapping a vast reservoir of independent and pivotal voters."

Consumers, apparently, don't consume in the cities—only in the suburbs.

Opinions of Others

... the office of the Internal Revenue service at Wichita has received hundreds of letters and calls during the past few weeks regarding the proposed 1964 legislation. A large percentage of these inquires is made in the belief that if, and when, changes are made in the tax laws, the benefits will be immediate and reduce the 1963 taxes. Such belief is strictly untrue, declares Harry F. Scribner, the district director. Every taxpayer must make his full return for 1963, and get it on file as soon as possible. He will thus be eligible to receive tax refunds, if any, when the proposed tax bill finally becomes a law. —El Dorado (Kan.) Times

Edmund Burke, the great English statesman, once was quoted as saying there were three estates in Parliament. Then Thomas Carlyle, the noted British essayist, added: "But in the reporters' gallery yonder there sat a fourth estate more important far than they all." When Carlyle wrote these words more than a century ago adding the press to the church, the peerage and the commoner, he was looking shrewdly into the future. He could see despotism on the march in countries with newspapers and news media under the thumb of government. He could see freedom on the march where the press was free. —Findlay (Ohio) Republican-Courier

'Kookie' Novel Could Be Coming Rage for Readers

As a publisher's editor, Henry W. Simon has acted as security blanket, whipping boy, father figure and giver-of-advice (mostly ignored) to a couple of generations of American writers. Simon is a calm, relaxed, optimistic executive of Simon & Schuster, one of America's most successful publishing enterprises. He was here the other day to check on the output and future plans of his established practitioners in this area (Ernest K. Gann and Niven Busch among them. He dropped into our office to discuss a perennial publishing problem — the case of the first novelist.

There are probably more talented novelists in this country, especially first novelists, than there are readers of fiction. Average sale of a published first novel (which is usually the author's second or third try) is an unprofitable 3,000 copies. Most of these are "good unimportant books," "promising books," "respectable failures." Why does a publisher continue this risk? Because just over the horizon might be a spectacular success, like Joseph Heller's "Catch-22," which Simon & Schuster introduced in 1961. Or another Herman Wouk, Harold Robbins, Leon Uris. Or Ernest Hemingway.

Even "Catch-22," which Henry Simon does not particularly like, was not a spectacular success in its hard-cover edition. A spoof of the military life and of general organized absurdity, it sold about 25,000 copies (spectacular enough, for a first novel). People got excited about it—loved it or hated it, in about equal measure—in its paperback version. A cool million copies, and still going. Youngsters of the post-Salinger variety take to it, Simon suspects, because of its crazy wit and its picture of the madness of military life

Quote

"Politics—the most promising of all careers. Promises, promises, promises." — Bill Stewart, Spooner (Wisc.) Advocate.

and war. What about Heller's second novel? Heller won't tell even his editor what it is about. Second novels by successful first novelists almost always have trouble and are almost always greeted as disappointments. This probably will happen with Heller. Might he quit while he's ahead with a single big success? No, the second (secret) Heller is definitely in the works.

Any "trends" in fiction? Maybe the "kookie" novel. Crazy wit, like "Catch-22" related to the sick joke. Elliott Baker's "A Fine Madness" is an example, a plea for the artist's role in a conformist society. Warren Miller's "Looking for the General" is another, a spoof of scientific military research. Stanley Kubrick's movie, "Dr. Strangelove," is related to this creative genre — poking fun at the manners and absurdities of our time.

Anything exciting due from S & S? Henry Simon was cautious. There's a "brilliant and repulsive" first novel by Wallace Markfield, "To An Early Grave," due this month. This ridicules far-out literary criticism and little magazine writing. It centers on the funeral of a little magazine's young writing idol, Kookie. Simon & Schuster has hopes for this. Something beyond the standard 3,000-copy sale.

Notes on the Margin . . . Elizabeth Bowen's long out of print novel of 1929, "The Last September," has been republished by Knopf (\$4.95). A tale of Ireland in the 1920s by this Irish-born stylist.

A long-awaited new novel by William Golding, author of "Lord of the Flies," is due in April from Harcourt. Titled "The Spire," it is a work of "enormous scope and striking originality," its publishers claim.

Our Man Hoppe

If You Can't Whip 'Em Quit

Art Hoppe

Our Leaders in Washington are mulling over a brilliant new strategy: invade North Vietnam. And it certainly makes sense. If we can't win the war we're fighting in South Vietnam, I say, let's go fight it somewhere else.

Of course, nobody seems to have asked South Vietnam what it thinks of the idea. As you know, the South Vietnamese Army of 400,000 men is having a mite of trouble holding its own against 100,000 Communist-led peasants. And how will it feel about taking on North Vietnam? Which has 16 million Communist-led peasants.

Oddly enough, I'm just the ace expert to reassure everybody on this point. For I happen to be the only ace expert on the neighboring nation of West Vhtnng. (cq) Where precisely the same question cropped up.

It was in the 27th year of our lightning campaign to wipe out the dread Marxist-Leninist Viet-Narian gorillas. (cq) The Loyal Royal Army, under the command that week of General Hoo Dat Dar, burned as always with a spirit of fierce resistance. Primarily against the idea of fighting anybody.

Our Secretary of Defense, was making his monthly "crisis mission" to Vhtnng and had just issued his assessment to the press: "There is no cause for alarm in the catastrophic situation because around the corner lies either victory or something else and I pledge to have our boys out of the trenches by Christmas, Christmas of 1993."

So he was in a grim mood when he met with General Hoo Dat Dar to confer. "The fact is, the war is going badly and we must take some bold, dramatic step," says our Secretary. "Surrender?" Suggests General Hoo Dat Dar hopefully. "Never!" says our Secretary firmly. "We cannot afford to lose West Vhtnng. Not to mention California, Illinois and both Dakotas in the fall election. No, the fighting Loyal Royal Army must launch a do-or-die invasion of the impregnable stronghold of East Vhtnng."

"What are you," inquires General Hoo Dat Dar politely, "some kind of nut?"

"The alternative, as I see it," says our Secretary imperturbably "is to redouble our efforts here in West Vhtnng. Our 15,000 military advisers will drop twice as many napalm bombs. We'll make twice as many strafing runs. Bomb! Burn! Destroy! With luck, we'll blacken every square inch of West Vhtnng. Blood will flow in . . ."

"Blood?" says General Hoo Dat Dar. And he faints dead away.

When they revive him, he makes a speech: "Mr. Secretary, after due deliberation I feel I speak for all the people of West Vhtnng in beseeching your 15,000 military advisers to lead a glorious invasion of East Vhtnng. Rest assured the fighting Loyal Royal Army will be behind them to the man. Somewhere."

So, as I say, I'm sure the majority of South Vietnamese would be delighted if we would carry the war to North Vietnam. Or anywhere else.

Indeed, looking back on the villages we've burned, the crops we've destroyed and the ignorant peasants we've killed—all in the name of Cold War politics—I think it's the nicest thing we could do for them.

Morning Report:

It's too early to tell if Jack Ruby is going to get a fair trial in Texas. But already there's no doubt he's going to get a long one.

Of course he shot Oswald. About 100 million Americans saw him do it on TV—originally live from Dallas, on countless re-runs, and in slow motion.

So the defense will trot out any number of psychiatrists to say he was nuts at the time of the shooting and is now sane. The prosecution will have their experts say he was sane then and now. And the jury—12 amateurs in the field of mental health—will decide which batch of experts knows the subject. It surely puts a strain on the great Anglo-Saxon jury system.

Abe Mellinkoff